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# THE ARMY'S GI BILL ADVERTISING AWARENESS SURVEY A DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS

BY

**PAULA E. GILKEY** 

**June 1986** 

Approved for Public Release; Distribution Unlimited



Research and Studies Division

Progam Analysis and Evaluation Directorate

Fort Sheridan, Illinois 60037

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The views, opinions, and findings in the second rule as an official Department of the Army position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other authorized documents.

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### **ABSTRACT**

In March 1985, the US Army began an advertising campaign for the New GI Bill. A survey sponsored by the US Army Recruiting Command and conducted by Crossley Surveys, Inc. provided several conclusions concerning the effectiveness of the advertising campaign. This research memorandum reports use of discriminant further interpret analysis to the results of the survey. This analysis distinguishes between those with a positive propensity to enlist and those with negative propensity. It also compares the effects of advertising to the effects of other variables on propensity. Results show that the most discriminating factor is the prospect's attitude toward learning a management skill. with a positive propensity feel that learning a management skill is Those while those with a negative propensity feel it is less important.

Keywords: variables, enlistment; statistical analysis Television Commercials; THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### I. INTRODUCTION

### Purpose

The purpose of this study is to analyze the results of a survey sponsored by the U.S. Army Recruiting Command to measure awareness of the New GI Bill advertising, using discriminant analysis. The discriminating function will identify those variables that significantly affect the respondents' propensity to enlist. The study also e. mines the effect of the GI Bill, relative to other variables, on a prospect's propensity to enlist.

### The New GI Bill

On 1 July 1985, the Army replaced the Veteran's Education Assistance Program (VEAP) with the New GI Bill, which covers anyone who comes on active duty between 1 July 1985 and 30 June 1988. However, when soldiers arrive at the reception station, they have the option of disenrolling from the program; the decision is final. Those who remain in the program will have \$100 per month deducted from their pay for the first 12 full months of active duty. The government contributes \$3 for every dollar contributed by 3- and 4-year enlistees and \$6.5 dollars for each dollar contributed by the two-year enlistees.

For those who qualify, the New Army College Fund (ACF) can provide a "kicker" (bonus) that can add up to \$400 a month to the basic GI Bill benefit. To qualify for the ACF, a soldier must have no previous service, have a high school diploma, score 50 or above on the Armed Forces Qualification Test, enlist in a selected occupational specialty, and enroll under the New GI Bill. There

are also programs for Selected Reserve personnel and Vietnam-era GI Bill recipients. Table 1 shows a comparison of educational benefits under VEAP and the New GI Bill.

The continuation of the New GI Bill after its three years test period is contingent upon its successful achievement of stated goals. According to USAREC Circular 621-1, "The New GI Bill was enacted to assist in the recruitment and retention of highly qualified personnel in the Regular Army (RA) and the US Army Reserve (USAR) by providing financial assistance for higher education." Thus far, statistics show an improvement in recruiting since the inception of the New GI Bill. According to a Government Accounting Office (GAO) report (1986), participation in the New GI Bill is considerably higher than in the VEAP program it replaced.

Table 1. Comparison of education benefits

Source of Contributions	VEAP	VEAP-era ACF	New GI Bill	New GI Bill w/New ACF
Four years service (or longe	r): .		-	
Soldier Contributes	\$2,700	\$ 2,700	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Government Contributes	5,400	5,400	9,600	9,600
Kicker	•	18,300	· <del>-</del>	14,400
Total Benefit	\$8,100	\$26,400	\$10,800	\$25,200
Three years' service:				
Soldier contributes	\$2,700	\$ 2,700	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Government Contributes	5,400	5,400	9,600	9,600
Kicker	•	12,000	•	12,000
Total Benefit	\$8,100	\$20,100	\$10,800	\$22,800
Two years' service:				
Soldier contributes	\$2,400	\$ 2,400	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Government contributes	4,800	4,800	7,800	7,800
Kicker	=	8,000		8,000
Total Benefit	\$7,200	\$15,200	\$ 9,000	\$17,000
Selected Reserve			\$ 5,040	
	\$7,200	\$15,200		\$17,000

<sup>\*</sup>Effective 1 July 1985

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SOURCE: Department of the Army, Commander's Guide to the New GI Bill and the New Army College Fund, SAPA-CI-PMA, Washington, 1985.

### Meacuring Advertising Awareness of the New GI Bill

The advertising campaign for the New GI Bill began in March 1985. To determine the effectiveness of this campaign, Crossley Surveys, Inc. (1986) was contracted to design a questionnaire and conduct a survey, based on the following criteria:

- a. Awareness and understanding of the education benefit offered.
- b. Prospect's perceptions of the Army experience on a series of characterletics developed from communication objectives in general.
- c. Prospect's attitudes toward connecting a recruiting office and enlistment.

In addition, the survey also contained questions to determine advertising awareness, recall, and perceptions of the advertising in terms of believability, meaningfulness, interest, and informativeness.

Almost 2,000 males between the ages of 17 and 22 were interviewed at shopping malls in 12 cities throughout the United States. The interviews were conducted in a series of four waves (July, August, October, and December) over a six-month period in 1985. Each wave was scheduled to correspond with Army or joint services television advertising of the New GI Bill. No attempt is made in this report to discriminate between waves.

Results of the Crossley survey indicate that the advertising campaign was successful in: (1) communicating the fact that the Army does offer the GI Bill and that it helps to pay for part of college, (2) creating a more favorable per-

ception of the overall Army experience, and (3) creating a stronger into in the Army than did joint services advertising campaign.

### II. METHODOLOGY

### Discriminant Analysis

"Discriminant analysis begins with the desire to statistically distinguish between two or more groups of cases. These 'groups' are defined by the particular research situation" (Klecka, 1975). The groups for the purpose of this study were those with a positive propensity to enlist and those with a negative propensity to enlist. These groups were chosen because they could be most readily and accurately identified by the Crossley survey. Further details on the categorization of respondents into these two groups is discussed in the section entitled "Identification of the Discriminant."

To distinguish between the two groups, the researcher must judiciously select a "collection of discriminating variables that measure characteristics on which the groups are expected to differ" (Klecka). In this particular study, all of the variables measured in the survey were chosen as possible discriminants. Examples of such variables were age, race, and level of education.

While this research memorandum uses discriminant analysis to determine what factors were most significant in separating the two groups, the same analysis

could also be used to predict to which group a respondent is most likely to belong.\*

### Identification of the Discriminant

The basis for assigning respondents into positive and negative enlistment propensity groups was the following survey question:

Which one of the statements on this card best describes the likelihood of your enlisting in the US Army?

Definitely will . . . . . 4

Probably will . . . . . . . . . 3

Probably will not . . . . . 2

Definitely will not . . . . 1

Those who responded "definitely will" or "probably will" were placed in the positive group; those who responded "probably will not" or "definitely will not", in the negative group. Those who did not respond were excluded from the analysis.

Responses to the remainder of the items in the survey, with the exception of those questioning likelihood of going to see a recruiter, likelihood of going to see a recruiter if a one-year enlistment option is offered, and likelihood to enlist for a one-year term, were used to determine the discriminating variables.

<sup>\*</sup>For a more thorough discussion of discriminant analysis, see Klecka (1975).

### Performing the Analysis

The analysis was conducted with the <u>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</u> (SPSS), which is programmed to automatically determine the mean or centroid of each group's responses (positive and negative). The program then compares the individual means to the overall sample mean (centroid). Using this method, SPSS determines which variables separate the two groups and which variables are most important in the discrimination.

### Variable Selection Procedure

The stepwise procedure, a subprogram of the main SPSS program, is used to select the discriminating variables. This procedure first selects the best discriminating variable and then searches for the next variable that will enhance the effect of the first variable. The subprogram continues to determine subsequent variables that further discriminate between the two groups, until all variables have been used or until the program determines that the effect of additional variables is no longer relevant to discrimination.

### III. RESULTS

While statistics show a marked improvement for enlistment since the onset of the New GI Bill advertising campaign, the majority of young American males still have no desire to join the Army, as the results of the "Propensity" question show in table 2.

Table 2. Likelihood to enlist in the Army

Category Label	Abso	olute Frequency	Relative Frequency(%)
Definitely will not		565	51.4
Probably will not		350	31.8
Probably will		145	13.2
Definitely will		36	3.2
Not stated		4	0.3
	TOTAL	1,099	100.0

### Discriminating Variables

Twenty-five of the variables were found to be significant in distinguishing the two groups. Of those, four were directly related to advertising and advertising awareness, but only one was exclusively related to the New GI Bill advertisement. When those who said they never saw an Army advertisement (273 respondents) were excluded from the data base, 23 variables were found to be significant, four again directly related to advertising but none to the New GI Bill. The results of further analysis with the complete data base (including the 273 respondents who reported never seeing an Army advertisement) are presented in subsequent sections.

The variables selected on the basis of the discriminating function having an effect on propensity are listed in table 3, in descending order of discriminating value.

### Table 3. Discriminating variables

- (1) Perception of Army as a place to learn management skills.
- (2) Opinion on whether or not a college education is worth three years of active duty.
- (3) High school status.
- (4) Perception of Army TV commercials (interest).
- (5) Perception of Army as a place to learn leadership skills.
- (6) Perception of Army TV commercials (informativeness).
- (7) Importance of freedom to express opinions.
- (8) College education.
- (9) Opinion of Army job choices vis-a-vis other services.
- (10) Army radio advertising rank.
- (11) Perception of Army service as an experience to be proud of.
- (12) Perception of Army service as a chance to broaden civilian career opportunity.
- (13) High school grades.

- (14) Importance of job security.
- (15) Importance of good retirement benefits.
- (16) Accurate knowlege of GI Bill opportunity in the Army.
- (17) Place of residence.
- (18) Perception of Army as a place to work with high tech equipment.
- (19) Perception of Army as a place for civilian career development.
- (20) Importance of having a chance for adventure.
- (21) Importance of a variety of duties.
- (22) Race or ethnicity.
- (23) Importance of challenging work.
- (24) Importance of continued self improvement.
- (25) Importance of having good people to work with.

The crosstabulations of these variables with the two groups are presented in Appendix A and the coefficients of the variables (results of the stepwise procedure) are presented in Appendix C. Apendix B shows frequency distributions of significant variables related to demographic data and advertising awareness.

### Classification

The discriminant function of the SPSS classified the prospects' responses into either the negative or positive propensity group. Because there is a possibility of overlap, it is impossible to place a respondent in the correct group 100% of the time. The results of the classification are shown in table 4.

Table 4. Classification Results

Actual Group	Number of Cases	Predicted Group		Membership 2	
		No	%	No	%
Group Negative 1	914	671	73.4	243	26.6
Group Positive 2	181	31	17.1	150	82.9

Table 4 shows that the program accurately classified negative group membership for 73.4% of the cases and positive group membership for 82.9% of the cases. The overall percentage of cases correctly classified was 74.96%.

### GI Bill Advertising

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As a discriminator, the awareness of the GI Bill ranked 16th among the 25 discriminating variables. The standardized coefficient for the awareness of the GI Bill item is -0.09995 or 1/50 of the variable with the largest coefficient.

This indicates that the advertisement for the New GI Bill was not as significant as were other factors in discriminating between groups. The conclusions concerning the advertising of the GI Bill and education benefits are listed below:

- (1) The majority of those in the positive group realized that the Army offers the New GI Bill.
- (2) The majority of those in the positive group were aware of education benefits offered by the Army.
- (3) The majority of those in the positive group felt that a college education is worth three years of service in the Army.

### IV. FINDINGS

The vast majority (83.2%) of those interviewed reported a negative propensity to enlist. The following factors distinguish the "positive" group from the "negative" group:

- (1) More likely to agree that the Army is a place to learn management skills.
- (2) More likely to agree that a college education is worth three years of active duty.
- (3) Most of the members are still in high school.
- (4) Most described Army commercials as being interesting or very interesting.
- (5) More likely to agree that the Army is a good place to learn leadership skills.
- (6) Most described Army commercials as being informative.

- (7) Less likely to deem freedom to express opinions as being important.
- (8) Most had not attended college.
- (9) More likely to agree that the Army offers the greatest job choices of the services.
- (10) More likely to rank Army radio advertising first among all of the services.
- (11) More likely to agree that serving in the Army is an experience to be proud of.
- (12) More likely to agree that the Army offers a chance to broaden civilian career opportunity.
- (13) As their school grades decrease, propensity increases.
- (14) More likely to report job security as being unimportant.
- (15) More likely to report good retirement benefits as being important.
- (16) A greater percentage realizes that the Army offers the GI Bill. (Adversely, a greater percentage relative to the negative group, reports that the Army does not offer the GI Bill.)
- (17) Most live in a large city or in a suburb of a large city.
- (18) More likely to agree that the Army is a good place to work with highly technical equipment.
- (19) More likely to agree that the Army is a good place for civilian career development.
- (20) More likely to report that a chance for adventure is extremely important.
- (21) More likely to report that a variety of duties is important.
- (22) Greater percentage of Blacks.
- (23) More likely to report challenging work as being extremely important.
- (24) Less likely to report continued self improvement as being excremely important.
- (25) Slightly more likely to report having good people to work with as being important.

The following other variables that did not appear in the analysis provide interesting results:

- (i) A greater percentage of the positive group had seen Army TV advertising.
- (2) The majority of the positive and negative groups mentioned education benefits as being part of Army advertising.
- (3) The positive group as a whole was younger than the negative group.

### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are additional studies that could be done concerning New GI Bill advertising:

- (1) Analyze the results of the Crossley Survey by wave, to determine the effects of New GI Bill advertising.
- (2) Analyze discriminant variables that appear to be significant in the analysis, but do not show a great disparity between groups.
- (3) Analyze the respondents more specifically by demographic characteristics.
- (4) Analyze the attitudes of high school students in greater detail.
- (5) On future surveys focus more items on the New GI Bill itself to avoid the influence of other variables related to advertising (e.g. adventure, travel, management skills).

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### APPENDIX A

The following crosstabulations show the responses by propensity groups, in percent to survey items used as discriminant variables:

(1) Army provides best opportunity for learning management skills:

Propensity Group	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Negative	18.2	66.7	15.1
Positive	2.1	48.3	49.6

(2) A college education is worth three years' active Army duty:

Propensity Group	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Negative	20.9	40.3	38.8
Positive	3.3	23.9	72.8

(3) High school student:

Propensity Group	Yes	No
Negative	26.8	73.2
Positive	51.9	48.1

(4) Describe Army TV commercials (interest):

Propensity Group	Boring	Neither	Interesting
Negative	15.7	27.5	56.8
Positive	6.4	6.1	87.5

(5) Army provides best opportunity to develop leadership skills:

Propensity Group	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Negative	16.1	58.5	25.4
Positive	5.4	33.7	60.9

(6) Describe Army TV commercials (informativeness):

Propensity Group	Unformative	Neither	Informative
Negative	12.7	15.8	71.5
Positive	7.4	11.2	81.4

(7) Importance of freedom to express opinions:

Propensity Group	Not Important	Neutral	Important
Negative	5.7	23.7	70.6
Positive	4.7	34.3	61.0

(8) College education:

Propensity Group	Some College	No College
Negative	37.4	62.6
Positive	13.8	86.2

(9) Army offers greater number of job choices than other services:

Propensity Group	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Negative	17.3	62.5	20.2
Positive	5.7	47.3	47.0

### (10) Rank order of radio advertising (Army only):

Propensity Group	<u>ist</u>	<u>2nd</u>	3rd	4th	Not Mentioned
Negative	38.5	4.3	0.7	0.7	55.8
Positive	53.0	1.7	1.1	0.6	43.6

### (11) Army service-an experience to be proud of:

Propensity Group	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Negative	10.8	46.8	42.4
Positive	1.1	22.3	76.6

### (12) Army experience can broaden civilian career opportunity:

Propensity Group	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Negative	8.1	53.1	38.8
Positive	2.4	34.3	63.3

### (13) High school grades:

Propensity Group									
Negative	11.2	20.6	18.8	28.2	14.1	4.0	1.9	0.9	0.3
Positive	4.5	18.2	19.0	31.7	16.7	5.7	2.1	2.1	0

### (14) Importance of job security:

Propensity Group	Not <u>Important</u>	Neutral	Important
Negative	1.4	17.2	81.4
Positive	0.6	18.1	81.3

### (15) Importance of good retirement benefits:

Propensity Group	Important	Neutral	Important
Negative	3.5	16.7	79.8
Positive	1.0	9.8	89.2

### (16) Does the Army offer the GI Bill?

Propensity Group	Yes	<u>No</u>	Unknown	No response
Negative	66.4	3.8	13.0	16.6
Positive	73.5	8.1	10.6	7.8

### (17) Place of residence:

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•	Large City	Suburb of Large City	Medium City	Suburb of Medium City	Small City	Rural
Negative	16.3	34.6	17.1	9.3	16.7	6.0
Positive	28.3	24.4	14.9	13.4	16.1	2.9

### (18) Army offers opportunity to work with high-tech equipment:

Propensity Group	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Negative	6.1	33.9	60.0
Positive	2.8	17.2	80.0

### (19) Army has great value on civilian career development:

Propensity Group	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Negative	14.4	54.3	31.3
Positive	4.2	32.3	63.5

### (20) Importance of chance for adventure:

Propensity Group	Not <u>Important</u>	Neutral	Important
Negative	5.5	43,9	50.6
Positive	2.3	36.1	61.6

### (21) Importance of a variety of duties:

Propensity Group	Not <u>Important</u>	Neutral	Important
Negative	6.6	48.3	45.1
Positive	7.4	39.5	53.1

### (22) Race:

Propensity Group	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Negative	82.6	10.6	5.3	0.5	1.0
Positive	72.4	18.8	5.7	2.4	0.7

### APPENDIX A (concluded)

### (23) Importance of challenging work:

Propensity Group	Important	Neutral	Important
Negative	2.8	31.3	65.9
Positive	2.7	23.3	74.0

### (24) Importance of continued self-improvements

Propensity Group	Not <u>Important</u>	Neutral	Important
Negative	2.0	21.6	76.4
Positive	2.8	19.9	77.3

### (25) Importance of having good people to work with:

Propensity Group	Not <u>Important</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	Important
Negative	2.9	22.1	75.0
Positive	1.2	21.0	77.8

### APPENDIX B

The Crossley survey, "Measuring Advertising Awareness of the New GI Bill", was conducted in four waves from July to December 1985. One thousand ninety-nine young males between the ages of 17 and 22 were interviewed at malls in 12 different US cities. The frequency distributions of significant variables related to demographic data and advertising awareness are presented below:

### (1) Age:

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
17 years old	286	26.0
18 years old	235	21.4
19 years old	197	17.9
20 years old	1 <u>6</u> 5	15.0
21 years old	110	10.0
22 years old	106	9.7

### (2) High school status:

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Still in high school	340	30.9
High school graduate	759	69.1

### (3) Employment:

•	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Full-time job	487	44.3
No full-time job	602	54.8
No response	10	0.9

### (4) College education:

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Some college	367	33.4
No college	732	66.6

### (5) TV advertising (1st mention):

•	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Air Force	142	12.9
Army	552	50.2
Marines	177	16.1
Navy	98	<b>8.9</b>
Not stated	130	11.8

### (6) Radio advertising (1st mention):

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Air Force	80	7.3
Army	449	40.9
Marines	81	7.3
Navy	74	6.7
Not stated	415	37.8

### (7) Print advertising (1st mention):

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Air Force	171	15.6
Army	465	42.3
Marines	133	12.1
Navy	76	6.9
Not stated	254	23.1

### (8) Seen Army TV advertising:

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Yes	834	75.9
No	263	23.9
No response	2	0.2

### (9) Mentioned education benefits:

	Absolute <u>Frequency</u>	Relative Frequency %
Yes	733	66.7
No	100	9.1
No Response	266	24.2

### (10) Describe Army television commericals:

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Very uninformativ	e 22	2.0
Uninformative	78	7.1
Neither	124	11.3
Informative	516	47.0
Very informative	93	8.5
Not stated	266	24.2

### (11) Amount Army provides for college:

	Absolute Frequency	Relative <u>Frequency %</u>
Under \$5,000	152	13.8
\$5,000 to \$9,	999 182	16.6
\$10,000 to \$1	4,999 199	18.1
\$15,000 to \$1	9,999 147	13.4
\$20,000 to \$2	24,999 115	10.4
\$25,000 and	more 102	9.3
Not stated	106	9.7

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Offers	742	67.6
Does not offer	50	4.5
Does not know	139	12.7
Not stated	168	15.2

### (13) Describe Army TV commercials (believability):

	Absolute <u>Frequency</u>	Relative Frequency %
Very unbelievable	22	2.0
Unbelievable	63	5.7
Neither	. 118	10.8
Believable	550	50.1
Very believable	80	7.3
Not stated	266	24.2

### (14) Describe Army TV commercials (meaningfulness):

	·		•
	•	APPENDIX B (c	ontinued)
	2) Army offers GI Bill:		
		Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
	Offers	742	67.6
<b>3</b>	Does not offer	50	4.5
	Does not know	139	12.7
	Not stated	168	15.2
(1	3) Describe Army TV comm	nercials (believabi	ility):
(1		Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
	Very unbelievable	22	2.0
	Unbelievable	63	5.7
	Neither	. 118	10.8
	Believable	550	50.1
	Very believable	80	7.3
	Not stated	266	24.2
<b>%</b> (1	4) Describe Army TV comm	mercials (meanings	fulness):
(1		Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
	Very unmeaningful	29	2.6
	Unmeaningful	76	6.9
الوائ	Neither	204	18.5
	Meaningful	473	43.1
	Very meaningful	51	4.7
	Not stated	266	24.2
		25	
in the second se			

### APPENDIX B (concluded)

### (15) Describe Army TV commercials (interest):

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Very boring	23	2.1
Boring	93	8.5
Neither	196	17.8
Interesting	430	39.2
Very interesting	90	8.2
Not stated	267	24.3

### (16) Likelihood of enlisting in Army:

	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency %
Definitely will not	565	51.4
Probably will not	350	31.8
Probably will	144	13.1
Definitely will	36	3.2
Not stated	4	0.3

### APPENDIX C

### Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients\*

Description of Army commercials (interesting vs. boring)	0.50452
Description of Army commercials (informative vs. uninformative)	-0.39850
Perception of opportunity to learn management skills	0.33323
Opinion of college being worth three years of active duty	0.28152
High school status	-0.27200

<sup>\*</sup>All coefficients are statistically significant at 0.99 level.

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Army recruiting, military manpower, enlistment incentives, GI Bill, surveys, discriminant analysis, discriminating variables, Army College Fund, Veterans Education Assistance Program, propensity to enlist, advertising, Army television commercials.	
10. AMSTRACT /Castigue as reverse olds if responsity and ideality by black number.	)
In March 1985, the US Army began an advertising campaign for the New GI Bill. A survey sponsored by the US Army Recruiting Command and conducted by Crossley Surveys, Inc., provided several conclusions concerning the effectiveness of the advertising campaign. This research memorandum reports use of discriminant analysis to further interpret the results of the survey. This analysis distinguishes between those with a positive propensity to enlist and those with a negative propensity. It also compares the effects of advertising to the effects of	

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other variables on propersity. Results show that the most discriminating factor	
is the prospect's attitude toward learning a management skill. Those with a positive propensity feel that learning a management skill is important while those with a negative propensity feel it is less important.	
those with a negative propensity feel it is less important.	
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